

InterOffice Memo

Department of Workforce Development

Date: February 7, 2003

File Ref:

To: WDB Executive Directors, WDB Chairs, Chief Local Elected Officials, Job Center Operators, and Job Center Partners

From: Mary C. Rowin, Deputy Administrator
Division of Workforce Solutions

Subject: **Draft Requirements for Comprehensive Job Centers**

Purpose

This transmits the draft of Requirements for Comprehensive Job Centers and requests your review and comment. This review/comment period will extend for thirty working days from issuance of this draft, or until Friday, March 21, 2003.

Legislative and Policy References

- WIA legislation, Sections 111 (d), 117 (d), and 121; WIA regulations, Sections 661.205 and 661.305
- DWD/DWS Workforce Programs Guide Part 2, Section B.1.a.(1); and Section D.
- DWD/DWS WIA Planning Guidelines (1999), Sections IV (C) and V (and related guidance references)
- WIA State Plan for 2000-2004, Section III, B.1.h.i. and B.2.a. & b., Section IV, A.2., and Section V, D.

Background

History

Performance accountability and continuous improvement are key elements of the WIA one-stop service delivery system. Wisconsin Job Center Standards, first established in 1993 and updated regularly thereafter, have served as the foundation for the development and continuous improvement of Wisconsin's Job Center system. The Standards have provided a set of benchmarks for collaborative processes and service delivery expectations for Wisconsin's workforce development system.

In implementing WIA, DWS issued policy and planning guidance to WDBs that included a focus on Job Center Standards as one vehicle for WDBs to use in performance of their oversight functions for their Job Center service delivery system. The Job Center Standards were referenced in DWS guidance on selecting one-stop operators, in development of comprehensive centers, in local WIA five-year plans, and in provision of PY 2000 WIA state set-aside funds to assess WDA one-stop systems. Early implementation guidance recognized that the Job Center system and related Standards would evolve as WIA became fully implemented in Wisconsin.

At the same time that Wisconsin was working to develop its Job Center system, DWD/DWS encouraged local areas to become involved in US DOL-sponsored quality improvement initiatives (Simply Better and the Enterprise) as a tool for continuous improvement of system performance. That effort accelerated with implementation on WIA, an effort supported by Wisconsin's Baldrige-based quality award program, the Wisconsin Forward Award, which opened eligibility to not-for-profit and educational organizations in 1999.

To implement this continuous improvement strategy, DWD/DWS has sponsored a conference on performance excellence management, ensured that Baldrige-based principles are incorporated into state-sponsored WDB leadership training, and provided WIA state set-aside funds for development of local continuous improvement efforts. The local workforce development system, through the Wisconsin Workforce Development Association, has also endorsed Baldrige as a framework for improving Wisconsin's workforce development system.

The Draft Requirements for Comprehensive Job Centers

The draft Requirements for Comprehensive Job Centers attached represents the next evolution of the Wisconsin Job Center Standards. Developed by a workgroup of state and local Job Center partners, and endorsed by the state Council on Workforce Investment's WSCO Committee in December 2002, these state requirements incorporate WIA legislative requirements for comprehensive one-stop centers. They establish the minimum features -- the benchmarks -- that must be present for a job center to be designated a Comprehensive Job Center in Wisconsin. The draft requirements are organized around the seven Baldrige Criteria for Performance Excellence to promote a "system" approach to implementing and managing the requirements within a Comprehensive Job Center and throughout the local Job Center system. The Baldrige Criteria also provide a framework for systematically assessing operations and continuously improving results.

Role of the WDBs

Under WIA legislation, WDBs have responsibility for overseeing the area's one-stop system, including certifying one-stop operators. The Requirements for Comprehensive Job Centers are intended to serve as the tool for WDBs to meet these responsibilities. WDBs should use the requirements to:

- Designate WDA Comprehensive Job Centers based on WDB assessment of conformity to the Requirements for a Comprehensive Center consistent with their plans for Comprehensive Center development.
- Monitor and assess the Comprehensive Job Centers and other job centers in the area to identify improvement opportunities and advance the quality of the area-wide job center system.
- Monitor and assess the performance of the one-stop operator to ensure continued "demonstrated effectiveness", consistent with the guiding principles in early DWD/DWS guidance on designating one-stop operators.

The workgroup established by DWD/DWS to develop the attached draft Requirements for Comprehensive Job Centers is continuing to meet to develop a technical assistance guide to assist WDBs in implementing the requirements. The technical assistance guide will include more explanation about the requirements and well as tools to assist WDBs in carrying out key oversight responsibilities noted above.

Relationship to Current DWD/DWS System Integration Planning

The DWD/DWS has for several months been engaged in discussion about how Wisconsin's workforce development system can be improved. The Division's most recent product related to this effort, "*A Plan for an Integrated Workforce Service Delivery System in Wisconsin*" has generated a number of questions, particularly about how the chartering system proposed in the paper relates to "Requirements for Comprehensive Job Centers."

DWD/DWS views these two efforts as complementary, but distinct activities. The Division's "*Plan for an Integrated Workforce Service Delivery System*" remains in its formative stages and continues to evolve; no decisions or specific actions are expected in the immediate future. However, the revision of Job Center Standards into Requirements for Comprehensive Job Centers continues the long-standing process of reviewing and updating DWD/DWS existing policy guidance in general and the Job Center Standards in particular.

The Requirements for Comprehensive Job Centers, when finalized, will represent the minimum requirements for Comprehensive Job Centers in Wisconsin. These requirements will provide the basic foundation for future improvements in Wisconsin's Job Center system. Whatever evolves from "*A Plan for Integrated Workforce Service Delivery in Wisconsin*" will build on these existing requirements in an effort to take Wisconsin's Job Center system to the next, higher level of service integration and quality assurance. However, these system improvement efforts are not expected to replace requirements for Comprehensive Job Centers once they are finalized.

Action Required

This requests comments on the attached draft Requirements for Comprehensive Job Centers. Comments must be in writing and received by 4:00 p.m. on Friday, March 21, 2003. Please send comments to:

Sheryl Billups, DWD/DWS
PO Box 7972
Madison WI 53707-7972
Fax: 608-261-6968
Email: sheryl.billups@dwd.state.wi.us
Phone (if questions): 608-266-9615

cc: Ronald Hunt
Connie Colussy